





MARCH 2020 Volume 30 • Number 7

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE CITY OF DECATUR, GEORGIA

United States®

The 2020 U.S. Census is more than a population count. It's an opportunity to shape the future of Decatur. Data collected during the process is used to distribute federal funds back to local governments, change the boundaries of election districts, update the number of legislative seats representing the area and assist the city and City Schools of Decatur in planning and implementing programs, services and emergency response.

In 2010, the city's response rate was 82 percent. This year, the City Commission has set a target response rate of 90 percent. Help us achieve this goal by responding in one of three ways on April 1: online, by phone or by mail. Information about responding will begin arriving in your mailboxes in March.

For more information about the 2020 U.S. Census, visit 2020census.gov or decaturga.com/census.

Decatur Receives Inaugural Visionary City Award

he City of Decatur received the inaugural Visionary City Award, presented by Georgia Trend magazine and GMA, during the Cities United Summit in Atlanta in January. Decatur was recognized for its Better Together initiative, which brought together more than 800 residents who contributed more than 1,300 hours to the yearlong visioning and outreach project aimed at creating a more diverse and welcoming city.

Nine cities from across Georgia represented three population categories: small (under 4,999), medium (5,000-24,999) and large (25,000 and over). These cities have created positive community change through effective civic engagement and collaboration and have fostered healthy working relationships that make their communities places where people truly love to live and work.

Other winning cities include Hogansville, Donalsonville, Winterville, Adel, Thomasville, Marietta, Chamblee, and Sugar Hill.

Judges for the 2020 Visionary City Award were from Georgia Power, the Department of Community Affairs and the Atlanta Regional Commission. In addition to being recognized during GMA's Cities United Summit, winning cities were highlighted in the February issue of Georgia Trend.

Shipping to Sustainability

n the shadow of the financial crisis of 2008, four visionary professionals in the shipping industry came together to solve a growing problem. As companies moved further away from the core principles that have long driven viability in the industry, they saw a need for an international logistics company that focused on relationships, ethics, old-school freight forwarding, a passion for taking care of the customer and respecting the environment. With those ideals firmly entrenched, Thomas Jorgensen, Peter Aaro-Hansen, Edward Chambers and Rex Sherman officially launched Green Worldwide Shipping.

Focus on Downtown Development

Decatur was the launching pad for the new venture, but success rapidly expanded a footprint that now covers 10 major commercial centers across the country. This also ballooned a starting staff of just five people to more than 150 employees, leading Green Worldwide Shipping to be recognized as one of the top 40 fastest-growing middle-market

companies by the Atlanta chapter of the Association for Corporate Growth.

"Access to talent, a diverse economy, and an internationally connected transportation network made Atlanta the right location for our East Coast headquarters," said Thomas Jorgensen, Green Worldwide Shipping president and CEO. "Once we settled on the metro area, selecting Decatur was a logical choice because of its central location and the ethos of Decatur, which is consistent with the core principles of our business."

While many companies simply put "green" in their names to imply social responsibility,

See Focus on Downtown Development on page 4



Information for the FOCUS should be submitted by mail to Editor, Decatur Focus, P.O. Box 220, Decatur, GA 30031, or by email to decaturfocus@decaturga.com.



The Decatur Focus is a joint publication of the City of Decatur, the Decatur Downtown Development Authority and the Decatur Business Association. It is a newsletter intended to provide announcements and information related to events, activities, and businesses in the city of Decatur. The purpose of the newsletter is to promote the city and encourage the exchange of information among residents, business owners and the school system. Letters to the editor, editorials or other opinion pieces are not published. All press releases, announcements and other information received for publication are subject to editing. Information found in the Focus is also posted on Decatur's official website at decaturga.com. The deadline for submitting articles, announcements or advertising is the first day of the month preceding publication. Contact: Editor, Decatur Focus, P.O. Box 220, Decatur, GA 30031, 404-371-8386; fax 404-371-1593; email: decaturfocus@decaturga.com.



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Have a Story You Would Like to Share?

The Decatur Focus is the official newsletter of the City of Decatur, supported by the city, the Decatur Business Association and the Decatur Downtown Development Authority. The Focus is published 10 times per year and mailed to every household, business and professional license-holder in the city. January/February and July/August are combined issues.

The Decatur Focus publishes announcements and information about city services, downtown development, school news, business news, and news about individual residents and neighborhood associations. The newsletter's purpose is to promote the city and encourage the exchange of information among residents, business owners, and the school system.

Submissions are encouraged and should be received by the first of the month prior to the month of publication (i.e., information that appears in the April issue should be submitted by March 1). The Decatur Focus also accepts advertising. For information about ad rates call 404-371-8386.

Letters to the editor, editorials, or other opinion pieces are not published. All press releases, announcements, and other information received for publication are subject

Information published in the Focus is also posted on Decatur's official website. The deadline for submitting articles, announcements, or advertising is the first day of the month preceding publication. Contact: Editor, Decatur Focus, P.O. Box 220, Decatur, GA 30031, 404-371-8386; fax 404-371-1593; email decaturfocus@decaturga.com.

2020 Decatur Design Awards: Call for Nominations

n celebration of National Preservation Month in May, the City of Decatur and the Decatur Preservation Commission recognize and honor projects or individuals that promote excellence in preservation, design, sustainability, and advocacy.

Projects must have been permitted and completed within the last five years and must be located in the city of Decatur. For application requirements and the nomination form, go to decaturga.com/design-awards or contact Aileen de la Torre at aileen.delatorre@decaturga.com.

Nominations must be received by 4 p.m. on Wednesday, April 1, at Design, Environment, and Construction, 2635 Talley St., Decatur, GA 30030, or mailed to the attention of Aileen de la Torre, P.O. Box 220, Decatur, GA 30031. The ceremony will be held during National Preservation Month in May.

Design Award Categories include:

- · New Residential Infill
- New Commercial Construction
- Historic Preservation
- Public/Institutional Buildings
- Commercial Historic Rehabilitation
- Adaptive Use
- Residential Historic Rehabilitation
- Landscapes/Public Spaces
- Sustainable Design and Energy Efficiency
- · Leila Ross Wilburn Award for individuals/organizations promoting preservation and design excellence

Touch-A-Budget Returns

Tuesday, March 17 • 5-7 p.m. • MARTA Plaza

Get an up-close-and-personal look at the city's budgeting process at the free Touch-A-Budget event. See what "pending spending" is planned for the FY 2020-2021 city budget and how it supports the 2010 Strategic Plan principles developed by Decatur residents. Talk to representatives from all city departments and play budget games for prizes.

For information, check decaturga.com/budget. (Rain location: Decatur Recreation Center, 231 Sycamore St.)





The Budget in Brief

The Parts of a City Tax Dollar

\$26,751,270 Adop

225 ft/280 pt Adopted

Focus on Downtown Development continued from page 2



Green Worldwide Shipping has made environmental friendliness a core tenet of its business. Recognizing that the transportation industry is a leading contributor of carbon emissions, the leadership team at Green Worldwide Shipping implemented operational and technological strategies to curb and reduce its environmental impact.

In 2019, the company took an even bigger leap, establishing a radical new initiative to plant a tree for every Green Worldwide Shipping customer and every individual shipment. In less than a year, this campaign has led to the donation of more than 100,000 trees, sequestering more than 1,569 metric tons of carbon and adding more than 11,793 metric tons of oxygen back into the environment.



"We are incredibly proud of our record on corporate responsibility and the ways we continue to practice what we preach," said Jorgensen. "Specifically, we support the '10 Principles of Global Compact' from the

United Nations in the areas of human rights, labor, environment and anti-corruption, and our team takes tremendous pride in the ways we incorporate these into the work we do every day."

Congratulations, Scouts!

Decatur's St. Thomas More Catholic Church Boy Scout Troop 551 is very proud to announce that in November Boy Scouts Adebayo Ogoussan (DHS '19), Alexander Drago (DHS '19) and Spencer Clark (DHS '20) were presented with the Boy Scouts of America's highest rank of Eagle Scout. They joined Troop 551's first Eagle Scout, Jude Holmes (DHS '16), at the Spirit of Scouting Candle Ceremony. Congratulations to the new Eagle Scouts for their hard work, honor and dedication.



Striving for Gender Equality

International Women's Day March 8

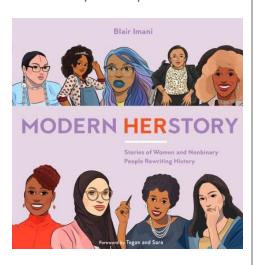
nternational Women's Day is a time to celebrate the cultural, social, economic and political achievements of women - and a call to action for gender equality. Gender disparities and injustices impact the lives of women across the globe. According to the most recent World Economic Forum Global Gender



Gap Report, the current trajectory for closing the gap across politics, economics, health and education is 99 years.

The Better Together Advisory Board has teamed with Charis Books to highlight the achievements of women as they work to accelerate equality for people of all genders. The book selections below are available at Charis Books and More, 184 S. Chandler St., or online at charisbooksandmore.com.

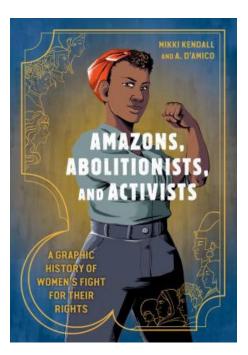
Modern HERstory by Blair Imani With a radical and inclusive approach to history, Modern HERstory profiles and celebrates 70 women and non-binary champions of social change in a bold, colorful, illustrated format for all ages. Despite making huge contributions to the liberation movements of the last century and today, these trailblazers



come from backgrounds and communities that are traditionally overlooked and undercelebrated: not just women, but people of color, queer people, trans people, disabled people, young people, and people of faith. Authored by activist Blair Imani, Modern *HERstory* tells the important stories of the leaders and movements that are changing the world – and will inspire you to do the same.

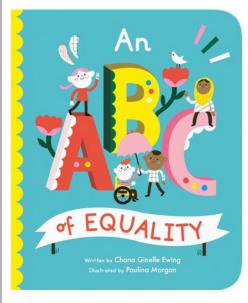
Amazons, Abolitionists, and Activists by Mikki Kendall and Aster D'Amico (Young Adult)

A graphic history of the fight for women's



rights. The ongoing struggle for women's rights has spanned human history, touched nearly every culture on earth, and encompassed a wide range of issues, such as the right to vote, work, get an education, own property, exercise bodily autonomy, and beyond. Amazons, Abolitionists, and Activists is a graphic-novel-style primer that covers the key figures and events that have advanced women's rights from antiquity to the modern era. Examining where we've been, where we are, and where we're going, the book is an indispensable resource for people of all genders interested in the fight for a more liberated future.

An ABC of Equality by Chana Ginelle Ewing, illustrated by Paulina Morgan A is for Ability, B is for Belief, C is for Class. All people have the right to be treated fairly, no matter who they are, what they look like, or where they come from. *An ABC of Equality* introduces complicated concepts surrounding social justice to the youngest of children. From A to Z, simple explanations accompanied by engaging artwork teach children about the world we live in and how to navigate our way through it. People from a range of backgrounds, ethnicities, and abilities lead the way through the alphabet.



The Facts on Flooding in Decatur

lthough the city is located at the top of the watershed, Decatur periodically experiences minor to moderate localized flooding. These conditions are a symptom of the fully developed nature of the city. Documented flooding problems have occurred along Peavine Creek at a condominium complex near Coventry Road. Along Peavine Creek Tributary, two houses on the south side of Garden Lane, and two houses on the south side of Lamont Drive are subject to occasional flooding. Five houses damaged by flooding at the end of Westchester Drive were purchased by the City of Decatur with help from FEMA and converted to green space.

Two isolated locations in the upper Peavine Creek Basin, Landsdowne Avenue at Hibernia Avenue, and an area along North Candler Street have some problems with flood damage due to poor localized drainage.

Occasional flooding on South Fork Peachtree Creek Tributary has been a continuing problem for property owners in the vicinity of Willow Lane just downstream of the Church Street crossing. In 1971, a flood on this tributary resulted in substantial personal property damage near Landover Drive and North Decatur Road.

Potential for flood damages appears to be minimal in the southern half of the city, which is drained by Shoal Creek and Sugar Creek Tributary. The lack of any significant history of flood damages to residences and other buildings along Shoal Creek and its tributaries is due to the absence of development on the floodplains in the southeastern section of the city. Because of extensive storm drainage improvements in the past, no recent flood damage problems have been experienced along Sugar Creek Tributary.

Although damage to buildings generally is limited, ponding behind drainage pipes and culverts and flooding of streets, driveways, parking lots, and yards are a recurring concern

at some locations in Peavine Creek, Shoal Creek, and South Fork Peachtree Creek Tributary basins. For example, the Peavine Creek basin often experiences flooding problems. Channel erosion and damage to drainage and bank stabilization structures are also a problem in some areas of these three basins. As a result of basin improvements, areas drained by Sugar Creek Tributary have been relatively free of ponding or erosion problems for many years.

City Flood Services

Decatur's Design, Environment and Construction Division provides general and site-specific flood and flood-related information on property located within the city limits. To obtain site-specific responses, individuals making inquiries must provide a survey of the specific property and elevation data relating to existing structures and site topography. The Design, Environment, and Construction Division and the Decatur Public Library also have reference documents on flooding and flood protection available for review.

A map information service is available from the division for a \$10 fee. This service provides inquirers with the current Flood Insurance Rate Map information and identifies whether

a property is in a Special Flood Hazard Area. An accurate street address or DeKalb County/ Decatur Tax Parcel number is needed to obtain this information.

For more information, contact the Design, Environment, and Construction Division, 678-553-6529.

What You Can Do

Several of the city's efforts depend on your cooperation and assistance. Here is how you can help:

- Do not dump debris or throw anything into the ditches or streams. Depositing debris, trash, and other items in ditches and streams is a violation of the city's Solid Waste Ordinance Section 82-38. Even grass clippings and branches can accumulate and clog channels. A clogged channel cannot carry the necessary volume of water. When it rains the water has to go somewhere, usually flooding yards and streets, thus damaging property and endangering public safety. Every piece of trash contributes to flooding.
- Individual property owners are responsible for maintenance of the creeks and drainage ditches on their property. Please do your part and keep the banks clear of brush and debris. In addition to maintaining the public roadways and public drainage facilities, the city can help remove major blockages from the creeks, such as fallen trees.
- Please report the depositing of debris and trash into streams and storm drains and blockages to the Design, Environment, and Construction Division, 678-553-6529.
- Check with the division before you build on, alter, re-grade, or fill on your property. Such activities in floodplains are strictly regulated and permits may be needed.
- Report illegal construction activities to the Design, Environment, and Construction Division, 678-553-6529.

City of Decatur Design, Environment, and Construction Division 404-377-6198 • decaturga.com

Floodproofing

There are several different ways to protect a building from flood damage. For example, you can re-grade your lot or build a small floodwall or earthen berm. These methods work if your lot is large enough, if flooding is not too deep, and if your property is not in the designated floodway. Please note that permits are required prior to undertaking these and similar activities.

Another approach is to waterproof your walls and place watertight closures over the doorways. This method is not recommended for houses with basements or if water will get more than two feet deep.

You can also consider raising the house above flood levels. You may drive by and check out the dwellings at 504 Westchester Dr. and 249 S. Columbia Dr. to see examples of elevated buildings. Many houses, even those not located in the floodplain, have sanitary sewers that back up into the basement during heavy rains. This may be due to stormwater infiltration into the sanitary sewer line. A plug or standpipe can stop this if the water doesn't get more than one or two feet deep. These can be purchased at a hardware store for under \$25. For deeper sewer backup flooding, talk to a plumber. The above measures are called floodproofing or retrofitting.

More information is available from the Decatur Design, Environment and Construction Division or the Decatur Public Library. Please note that re-grading or filling in the floodplain requires a permit. Also, any alteration to your building or land may require a permit from the division.

If you know a major flood is coming, you should shut off the gas and electricity and move valuable contents upstairs or raise items off the floor. Fortunately, the flooding experienced in Decatur is localized and most floodwaters will recede within a matter of a few hours. However it is unlikely that you will get much warning, so a detailed checklist prepared in advance will help ensure that you don't forget anything.

Flood Insurance

If you don't have flood insurance, talk to your insurance agent. Most homeowner's insurance policies do not cover damage from floods. However, because the City of Decatur participates in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and implements activities that exceed the minimum NFIP standards, you can purchase a separate flood insurance policy at discounted premiums. This insurance is backed by the federal government and is available to everyone, even for properties that have been flooded in the past. There is a 30-day waiting period from the time the insurance is applied until it becomes effective.

Some people have purchased flood insurance because the financial institution required it when they got a mortgage or home improvement loan. Usually these policies just cover the building's structure and not the contents. Property owners need to verify with their insurance agent what the extent of contents coverage is available. During a flood in 1990, the damage to the contents of a property near the South Fork Peachtree Creek Tributary exceeded the damage to the structure.

At last count, there were 202 active flood insurance policies in the city of Decatur. If you are covered, check out the amount and make sure you have contents coverage. Remember: even if the last flood missed you or you have done some floodproofing, the next flood could be worse. Flood insurance covers all surface floods.

Flood Safety

Do not walk through flowing water. Drowning is the number one cause of flood deaths, mostly during flash floods. Currents can be deceptive; six inches of moving water can knock you off your feet. If you walk in standing water, use a pole or stick to ensure the ground is still there.

Do not drive through a flooded area. More people drown in their cars than anywhere else. Do not drive around road barriers; the road or bridge may be washed out. Stay away from power lines and electrical wires.

The number two flood killer after drowning is electrocution. Electrical current can travel through water. Report downed power lines to the Georgia Power Company by dialing toll free 1-888-891-0938. If your house or other structure is flooded, contact the power company to turn off the electricity. Some appliances, such as television sets, keep electrical charges even after they have been unplugged. Don't use appliances or motors that have gotten wet unless they have been taken apart, cleaned and dried by qualified personnel.

Look out for animals, especially snakes. Small animals that have been flooded out of their homes may seek shelter in yours. Use a pole or stick to poke and turn things over and scare away small animals. Look before you step.

After a flood, the ground and floors are covered with debris, including broken bottles and nails. Floors and stairs that have been covered with mud can be slippery. Be alert for gas leaks. Use a flashlight to inspect for damage. Don't smoke or use candles, lanterns, or open flames, unless you know the gas has been turned off and the area has been ventilated.

Inspections - Repair and **Maintenance Activities**

Staff from the Drainage Section of the Design, Environment, and Construction Division is available to conduct site visits to review flood, drainage, and storm sewer problems and determine if corrective repair or maintenance action is the responsibility of the city or the private property owner. For more information regarding this service or to request an inspection call 678-553-6579.

Learn More

For more information call the Design, Environment and Construction Division or visit decaturga.com and follow the links to the floodplain information. Copies of this document can be obtained at Decatur City Hall, 509 N. McDonough St., or the Leveritt Public Works Building, DEC office, first floor, 2635 Talley St.

Decatur Walk & Roll Superstar

Decatur resident Brian Gross rides MARTA from Decatur to downtown Atlanta for work four or five days a week. He and his wife bought a house in Decatur six years ago based on the proximity to MARTA, before any of their three daughters were born. When possible, he walks to the Decatur station. Brian takes MARTA because it is easier and less expensive than driving, and more reliable than it used to be when he started using it 15 years ago.



Third Friday Bike Rides Return in March Decatur Active Living invites all levels of cyclists to meet at the Decatur Recreation Center March 20, 6:30 p.m., to kick off this year's Third Friday Bike Rides. The social-paced, nodrop ride goes approximately six miles around Decatur neighborhoods. After the ride, participants will visit a local restaurant for refreshments and camaraderie. The ride is not recommended for children. Be sure to wear a helmet and have lights on your bikes. For more information contact cheryl. burnette@decaturga.com.

Touch-a-Truck

Saturday, March 21 • 10 a.m.-1 p.m. East Lake MARTA Station, north lot

Join Decatur Active Living for the annual Toucha-Truck community event. The event gives children of all ages an opportunity to touch, explore and see their favorite trucks or equipment on wheels. City of Decatur and DeKalb County dump trucks, fire trucks, tractors, police cars and motorcycles and many other types of vehicles will be on display.

Ride MARTA!

This year's Touch-a-Truck event will be held in the East Lake MARTA station's north lot (W. Howard Avenue/DeKalb Avenue). Parking is limited so consider riding the train, walking or biking to the event.

Register Your Bike

We encourage folks to ride their bikes to the event to have them registered by the Decatur Police Department. All those who ride bikes to the event will also receive a special bike pin.

Food Drive

March is National Nutrition Month, a campaign that focuses attention on the importance of making informed food choices and developing sound eating and physical activity habits. When you come to Touch-A-Truck, join in the effort by bringing a canned or nonperishable food item. All items will be delivered to Decatur Emergency Assistance Ministry (DEAM).

In the event of rain, Touch-a-Truck will be held on March 28. This year's event is sponsored by the City of Decatur and MARTA.

For more information, contact Cheryl Burnette, 678-553-6541 or cheryl.burnette@ decaturga.com.



2020 MLK Project:

Dedicated Volunteers Are the Key to Success

he 2020 Martin Luther King Jr. Service Project was once again a success despite some drizzly weather at the beginning and cold at the end. There were 954 volunteers who were determined to do whatever it took to make sure our older residents could continue to live safely, comfortably, warmly and affordably in their homes.

The volunteers ranged from scout troops to high school students to skilled professionals to home-handy people to unskilled volunteers who want to help in any way. This year, visitors from Los Angeles who googled "MLK events in Atlanta" came to volunteer. No matter where they were from or what experience they had, there was an important job for everyone to fill.

Volunteers worked on a total of 32 homes. One of the homes only needed some yard work done. The others had both repairs and yard work.

Thanks to partners such as professional roofers, seven homes had roofs repaired. Professional plumbers and electricians made numerous repairs, including installing a new water heater and fixing a broken furnace. Other repairs included the addition and replacement of laundry rooms, cabinet replacement, toilet replacements, installation of washers, dryers and refrigerator, and the reconfiguration of a kitchen.

Thanks to a partnership with Southface Institute, two homes received intensive weatherization by Southface volunteers and both homes will be insulated.

The MLK Project invites you to join the leadership team as a House Captain. You do not need to have home repair skills, although they are a big help. If you are a leader, someone who is good at managing people, or want to further develop your skills to repair your own home, we would love to have you join us for the 2021 MLK Service Project. Contact leeann.harvey@ decaturga.com or call 678-553-6548 to find out how you can become involved.

















Plastics Survey Shows Support for Action

he Decatur Environmental Sustainability Board (ESB) recently conducted an online survey of public opinion toward single-use plastics and their impact to our environment. More than 900 respondents participated, including a mix of residents, students, business owners, and visitors.

The survey and a panel discussion held on Dec. 9 represent initial steps in the process to educate the community on the challenges associated with single-use plastics and assess community support for city-led actions to keep these items out of landfills, storm drains, and waterways. A review of the survey results points to three main findings:

Broad interest in prioritizing Styrofoam reduction initiatives. Styrofoam is difficult to recycle due to high processing costs and strict sanitary requirements. However, more than 80 percent of the survey respondents support restrictions on the use and distribution of Styrofoam products at restaurants, city facilities, and city-sponsored events.

Strong support for measures that discourage use of plastic bags. Although 90 percent of respondents indicate that they already use reusable bags, the majority still support measures to reduce demand for single-use plastic bags in Decatur. The most popular among these measures is a bag fee applied to both plastic and paper, designed to encourage customers to use their own bag or no bag at all. Despite the strong support, many respondents said they still want single-use plastic bags to remain available for produce, raw meat, dog waste, and other practical uses.

Widespread confusion around recyclability of single-use plastics. Many respondents expressed confusion over where and how to recycle their waste. Residents can place plastic bottles and jugs in their curbside recycling bins, but they should never place bags, Styrofoam, straws, or other single-use plastics in these bins. Instead, such "hard-to-recycle" materials must be brought to designated collection points that are specially equipped to sort and process these items for market.

Full survey results, including individual comments, can be found on the ESB webpage at decaturga.com/bc-esb. Recycling FAQs can be found on the Sanitation Services page at decaturga.com/sanitation.

Next steps: The ESB and the city plan to conduct additional engagement with residents, local businesses, and other stakeholders. The ESB and Public Works department will also launch recycling informational sessions to address the confusion identified in the survey.



Customers Show Appreciation to Dancing Goats Staff

In January, Dancing Goats customers, along with shop manager Kirsten, gathered at the coffee shop to host a surprise potluck dinner to honor and convey gratitude to the Dancing Goats team. Customers shared their favorite dinner dishes and desserts, and built bonds of friendship and community together. The event was organized by Decatur resident Linda Grant, for whom the coffee shop has served as a second home in the past few years. She visits and interacts with the staff almost every day.



A collection of paintings by Decatur resident Ion Abercrombie is on exhibit at the Decatur Arts Alliance Gallery/Decatur Visitors Center, 113 Clairemont Ave., through March 14, Tuesday-Saturday, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Visit decaturartsalliance.org for more information.

Share the Compassion!

Decatur residents Beth Waltemath and David Lewicki, copastors of North Decatur Presbyterian Church, invite you to share via social media where and how you see compassion displayed during the lenten season. Throughout March and April, North Decatur Presbyterian Church will highlight acts of mercy in the world. Use the hashtag #imagesofmercy when you post and tag @northdecaturpresbyterian. Go to ndpc.org/lent for more information.

AJC Decatur Book Festival Promotes Joy Pope to Executive Director

The AJC Decatur Book Festival has announced the promotion of Joy Pope from program director to interim executive director. She succeeds Julie Wilson as the festival's third executive director since its founding in 2006. Wilson is stepping down to spend more time with her family.

Pope has a dual-genre MFA in Writing from Vermont College of Fine Arts; a Master's degree in Liberal Arts from St. John's College; and a BA in English from the University of Oregon. She has lived in Decatur with her husband and two daughters since 2005.

The Decatur Book Festival is the largest independent book festival in the country and one of the five largest overall. Since its launch, more than four thousand authors and hundreds of thousands of festival-goers have crowded downtown Decatur to attend book signings, author readings, panel discussions, an interactive children's area, live music, parades, a culinary village, poetry slams, writing workshops, and more. The DBF also sponsors a number of other author and book events throughout the year.

In addition to this change of leadership, Mathwon Howard, associate vice president for Development Programs at Emory University, is assuming the role of president, and two new members are joining the board, local attorney Henry Parkman and Jeff Steely, Dean of Libraries at Georgia State University.

Decatur Rotary Funds Swim Lessons

Through Rotary International's District 6900 and its District Grant program, the Rotary Club of Decatur has funded a swim lessons program for Muslim women at the Decatur Family YMCA.

Through its foundation, the Decatur Rotary Club is now also accepting applications from organizations to support service projects in and around the Decatur area. The deadline for submissions is March 6. For more information visit decatur-rotary.org/grantapplication.





CCSD Board 2020 **Grant Applications**

The Community Center of South Decatur/ Solarium Board of Directors is accepting applications from Decatur-based nonprofit organizations to be considered for funding from proceeds from CCSD/Solarium fundraising events that were held in 2019.

CCSD is interested in funding projects that contribute to the quality of life in Decatur. The board prefers to use its grant funds to jump-start a special project and provide seed capital to get a focused activity off the ground. Organizations must be based within the city of Decatur to be considered.

The grant application for 2020 may be found at the solarium.com. Applications must be received by Tuesday, March 31. Winners will be notified in early May and grant checks presented at the May DBA meeting. Email questions to grants@thesolarium.com.

Oakhurst Welcomes Farmers Markets

Opening day: Saturday, April 18 • 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

This spring, Sceptre Brewing Arts will host a new farmers market in Decatur's Oakhurst neighborhood. The Oakhurst Farmers Market will be open every Saturday, April 18-Dec. 19. Vendors will offer fresh produce, meat, baked treats, and more. Live music and chef demonstrations with seasonal recipes will also be featured. There will even be a seasonal beer collaboration featuring market flavors.

Oakhurst Farmers Market is a project from Atlanta-based nonprofit Community Farmers Markets, which also runs the Decatur Farmers Market, Ponce City Farmers Market, EAV Farmers Market, Grant Park Farmers Market, and cooperates with the Fresh MARTA Markets. Its mission is to develop a local food infrastructure for long-term sustainability and meaningful community impact.

Opening day festivities will take place at Sceptre Brewing Arts, 630 East Lake Dr. For vendor opportunities, contact manager Casey at casey@cfmatl.org.

Business & Nonprofit News

Encore: Dance on Film 2020

Core Dance, in association with the Decatur Arts Festival and Barnstorm Dance Festival. seeks entries for EnCore: Dance on Film, featuring short movies by dance filmmakers from around the world. The screenings are free and open to the community.

The independent video dance productions, which have been shone annually since 2014, focus on the interplay between dance and the techniques of filmmaking, exploring the possibilities and boundaries of the art form

Submissions are \$10 and are due Friday, March 6. EnCore Screening will be May 22, as part of the Decatur Arts Festival.

Float Atlanta Now Open

Float Atlanta, 111 Clairemont Ave. next door to the Decatur Visitors Center, is now open. The full-time float center features an open float tank, an escape pod, and a flotarium tank. Massage therapy will be offered soon.

Float tanks contain 1,100 pounds of pharmaceutical grade Epsom salt and 150 gallons of water, making your body completely buoyant. During a 60-minute float session your brain will naturally move into the theta wave state, similar to that very relaxed point just before sleep and during deep meditation.

The top 10 benefits of floating are:

- 1. Decreases anxiety
- 2. Decreases depression
- 3. Improves sleep
- 4. Lowers stress
- 5. Relieves physical pain
- 6. Enhances athletic performance
- 7. Enhances creativity
- 8. Reduces PTSD
- 9. Reduces blood pressure
- 10. Deepens meditation and learning

Visit Float Atlanta on Facebook and Instagram, and visit FloatAtlanta.com to book appointments, buy gift cards, and learn more about floating.



The DeKalb Library Foundation has received a \$25,000 Community Impact Grant from New York Life in support of the Take the Internet Home with You initiative at the DeKalb County Public Library. The funds allow the library to offer mobile hotspot devices for checkout to patrons who may not have access to the Internet in their home.

Volunteer at Decatur Cemetery

The Friends of Decatur Cemetery Gardening Among the Graves group is looking for volunteers for projects in the old sections of the cemetery off Commerce Drive. This is an opportunity to meet fellow Decaturites, learn about what makes the cemetery special, and get some fresh air as you help to beautify this little corner of downtown.

The group meets on Tuesdays, 9 a.m.-noon, throughout the year, weather permitting. Tasks vary from picking up fallen branches to raking and weeding and even removing "alien invaders" like ivy, privet, honeysuckle, or bamboo. Bringing your own tools is a plus although FODC does have a few assorted gardening tools and gloves.

For more information contact Jim Rabb, Jimrabb1884@gmail.com, or Friends of Decatur Cemetery (FODC), friendsofdecaturcemetery@gmail.com.



Decatur Makers Named Regional Hub in National MakerEd Program

ecatur Makers is growing its support of educators working with K-12 students, after being accepted as a regional hub in the national MakerEd Making Spaces program. The program, supported by Cognizant and Google, is a Research Practice Partnership led by MakerEd and Children's Museum of Pittsburgh (CMP) with educational institutions across the nation. Its goal is to sustainably incorporate making into learning environments across the country.



Decatur Makers has joined the fourth cohort of Making Spaces hubs as the first participant in Georgia, and the third in the South-

east. During this 30-month program, they aim to sustainably incorporate maker-led education into schools and other organizations supporting K-12 education – whether it's individual activities, programs, or spaces - through professional development, planning and funding support, and evaluation processes.

By educating with a maker-centered approach focused on Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math (STEAM), problem solving and critical thinking are enhanced, and students and teachers become more collaborative, engaged, excited by new projects and willing to try new things, which helps students become more active change-makers in our communities.

Next steps for the local Decatur community will include outreach to community organizations to establish a cohort and plan for the fall pilot kick-off. Follow the progress at decaturmakers.org.

Emory Total Tennis Camp Registration Now Open

Emory Total Tennis Camp, a tennis specialty camp for boys and girls ages 5-14, is run by Decatur resident and Emory Women's Tennis coach Amy Bryant. She has directed tennis camps in the community for more than 15 years.

Camp is offered for all levels, in weekly sessions May 28-June 14, with drop off at 8:30 a.m. and pick up available as late as 5:30 p.m. Sessions will be held on Emory University's main campus. At the end of the day, full-day campers swim and

play glow-in-thedark tennis.

For more information or to register, visit bryantcamps. com.



DeKalb Magistrate Court Hosts Community Education Day

Saturday, March 21 • 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

The DeKalb County Magistrate Court will host its annual Magistrate Court 101: Community Education Day at the DeKalb County Courthouse, 556 N. McDonough St. Chief Magistrate Judge Berryl A. Anderson created the program in 2013 to provide an opportunity for school-aged children to learn about the court system.

The current program is designed for middle/high school students and adults. Activities include interactive sessions on the Georgia court system with a focus on the DeKalb County Magistrate



Court, a court tour, and a mock-trial exercise, held in the courtroom to provide a realistic experience for attendees.

The event is free to the community. Due to limited space, registration is required for each participant on a first-come, first-served basis. Registration is open until space is filled. To register, visit ticketleap.com and enter "Magistrate Court 101" in the event search box. For more information, call 404-371-2821.

Bra Boutique Opens in Decatur

Catering to full-busted women for 11 years in Los Angeles, Jenette Bras will open its fifth store, and its first outside California, this month at 307-A East College Ave. A grand opening party is scheduled for Thursday, April 23 at 6:30 pm.

The Decatur boutique reflects the mid-century design aesthetic of its other stores. An airy reception room serves as the nerve center for the shop. Once checked in, customers

are ushered into the atelier-style fit salon with its bra cabinet. The boutique, whose slogan is "The Alphabet Starts at D," caters to full-busted women whether a size 2 or 22. CEO Jenette Goldstein started the business with her husband, Aaron Noble, because she struggled to find appropriately sized support garments for herself.

Goldstein, an actress best known for her role as Private Vazquez in James Cameron's Aliens, as well as memorable parts in Terminator 2 and Titanic, chose the city for its "Indie-Catur" spirit, and because her mother and extended family are from the Atlanta area.

For additional information, visit jenettebras.com or follow @jenettebras_ATL on Instagram.

Mayor Garrett Delivers Annual State of the City Address







n the annual State of the City address in January, Mayor Patti Garrett introduced new Lesa City Commissioners Lesa Mayer and George Dusenbury, and thanked Commissioners Brian Smith and Scott Drake for their service to the community.

She highlighted the work that the Affordable Housing Task Force has done and continues to do, along with new businesses; the Legacy Park Master Plan; the Downtown Development Authority's new logo and business campaign; and new additions around Decatur, including the newest mural in the Old Depot District, "Monuments: Our Immigrant Mothers," and the "Start Where You Are" sculpture in Legacy Park, dedicated to former city manager Peggy Merriss.

Mayor Garrett celebrated the city's allfemale fire command staff, employee accomplishments, and the kick-off to the 2020 Strategic Plan process. She also invited Louis Jones, school board chair, to give an update on the state of the City Schools of Decatur.

















Sara Collins, DeKalb County Library staff member, is the 2020 recipient of Decatur's Thomas O. Davis Award for public service.



Employee service awards, from left: Anna Youngblood, Charlie Schley, Scott Richards, 30 years; Virginia Atchison, Gina Cain, 20 years; Lee Williams, 15 years; Mark Hensel, 20 years; Sean Woodson, 30 years.



Get to Know the DBA

he Decatur Business Association (DBA) is a local membership organization with a 30-plusyear history. It strives to support and promote a thriving business community in the city of Decatur. Our membership, 300 strong, includes business professionals from local restaurants and retail shops, corporate representatives, small-business owners, entrepreneurs, and neighbors from the community.

That's right! You don't have to own a business to be a DBA member. We offer associate memberships for those who share an interest in supporting local businesses, in building relationships, and who want to be more engaged with the community.

So...what does DBA do? It champions our local businesses and hosts programs and events to help members network and generate new and repeat business. We gather for membership meetings hosted at a different location each month, to provide exposure to Decatur businesses, and cre-



DBA President Susan Sparks

ate opportunities to connect new business owners with established members of the business community. We also promote Decatur as a great place to live, play, and do business.

Do you love the free events around town - the annual Easter Egg Hunt, the Decatur Concert Series, Santa on the Square, the Holiday Marshmallow Roast, and the ever-so-popular Decatur Beach Party? All are made possible with the support of our dedicated DBA members and generous sponsors.

We make it easy to get involved. Are you a new business owner in town? Come and be our guest at a meeting, 5:15 to 7 p.m., on the fourth Tuesday of each month, with snacks and beverages provided by local restaurants. Check out our schedule and locations at DecaturDBA.com.

Are you a community member who would love to help with one of our events? We love volunteers and event committee contributors. Reach out to us! We have the perfect role or task to suit your schedule, availability and talents.

DBA membership is open to all, so come be an active part of your local business community. Visit DecaturDBA.com and click on the "members" tab for information, to join, or to renew if you are already part of our business family.

> - Susan Sparks, president, Decatur Business Association, president@decaturdba.com.



March Membership Meeting

Clarity Fitness, One West Court Square, Suite 100

5:15 p.m. Networking Reception

6 p.m. Program

Sponsors Clarity Fitness and Farmburger

DBA Easter Egg Hunt

Saturday, April 4 • 10 a.m.-noon

Gather your friends, family, and neighbors, and head over to the front lawn of First Baptist Church of Decatur, 308 Clairemont Ave., for the annual Easter Egg Hunt. The Easter bunny arrives at 10:30 a.m., and the hunt begins at 11 a.m. There will be other fun activities as well. The event is presented by the Decatur Business Association in partnership with the First Baptist Church of Decatur.



Oakhurst Jazz Nights Spring Concert Series

The community is invited to hear live jazz every Thursday in April, 7-9 p.m., on the lawn of the Old Scottish Rite Hospital (Solarium), 321 W. Hill St. in Oakhurst. Bring your blankets (no lawn chairs please). The concerts are free. This is a rain or shine event – in case of rain, the concert moves into the Solarium.

For a front-row view of the concert, candlelit bistro tables are available for reservation. Each table seats up to four and comes com-

plete with chairs, table covers, and a custom candle-lit centerpiece. Reservations are \$25 per table, per night. For more information, visit the table reservation page on

JAZZ NIGHTS LINEUP

April 2 Bonaventure with Amy Pike

April 9 Eileen Howard April 16 Teresa Kay Williams

April 23 Gwen Hughes

April 30 Tito Gato

OakhurstJazzNights.com or email concerts@oakhurstjazznights.com. Elderly and mobility restricted attendees will be accommodated. Oakhurst Jazz Nights is produced by the Oakhurst Neighborhood Association with funding from the annual Oakhurst Wine Crawl.





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Terri Kruzan 404-510-3113 tkruzan@bellsouth.net



Decatur Recreation Center

Register with Sara Holmes at 678-553-6559 or sara.holmes@decaturga.com



Register for the Annual Tour deCatur Race

Bring your family and ioin other community members for the 18th annual Tour deCatur 5K race on Saturday, March 14. The Tour will also feature a one-mile fun run and tot trot, in addition to the 5K. If running or



walking isn't your thing, you can still be part of the event by volunteering at tourdecatur.com. Register online for the race at tourdecatur. com. Participants can pick numbers and T-shirts at the Tour Expo at Legacy Park, 500 S. Columbia Dr. (note the new location) on Friday, March 13, 11 a.m.-2 p.m., and 4 p.m.-7 p.m.

Participation in this community event supports the Decatur Education Foundation in raising funds to address some of the big issues facing Decatur students: racial and opportunity inequity, behavioral health and food insecurity. Visit decatureducationfoundation.org to learn more.

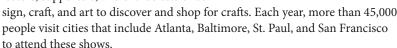




Decatur Artist to Participate in American Craft Show

Decatur artist Michael Klapthor can be seen at this year's American Craft Show at the Cobb Galleria Centre March 13-15. The show, in its 31st year, is a three-day celebration of all-things-fine-craft. Attendees can shop crafts from more than 230 artists specializing in contemporary jewelry, clothing, furniture, home goods and décor.

The Atlanta show, presented by the national nonprofit American Craft Council, offers a once-a-year opportunity for collectors, supporters, and enthusiasts of de-



Show tickets are available online for \$12 and on-site as a \$13 one-day pass, and are free for American Craft Council members and children ages 12 and under. For additional information or to purchase tickets, visit craftcouncil.org.



Trinity Mercantile & Design

Third Annual Women Create Art Show

Opening Friday, March 20 • 5-9 p.m. 116 E. Trinity Place

Trinity Mercantile & Design and the Decatur Arts Alliance will host the third annual "Women Create" collaborative art show, celebrating International Women's Month. The show will celebrate emerging and established women artists by exhibiting paintings, textiles, ceramics and jewelry from local artists. The event is open to the community.



create

It will feature a performance by the Merian Ensemble and include cocktails and bites. Collections will remain in store through April 3.



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Decatur City Dance Pays Homage to Movie Musicals

Saturday, March 7, 7 p.m. • Sunday, March 8, 2 p.m.

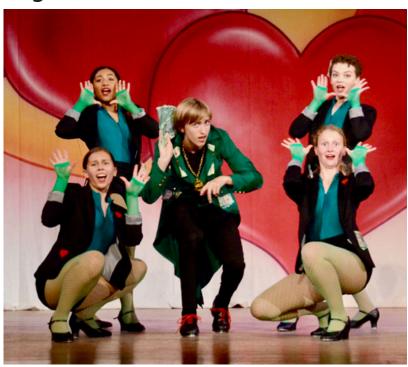
Decatur City Dance will present Let's Tap! A Tribute to Movie Musicals, at the Drew Charter School Performing Arts Theater. Join the Rhythm Keepers and Junior Rhythm Keepers tap companies, along with guests The Rug Cutters, for an evening of tributes to award-winning movie musicals and the performers who made them.

The show will include performances from films like *The* Wizard of Oz, Mary Poppins and Fred Astaire's Top Hat, as well as a tribute to Gene Kelly with a performance of his original choreography from Singin' in the Rain.

There will be special moments from classic films like West Side Story and Guys and Dolls, and dances from the contemporary films Chicago, Dreamgirls, Mama Mia, Hairspray and The Greatest Showman.

Be prepared to sing along with tunes from *Grease* and *The* Rocky Horror Picture Show and be sure to bring your tap shoes and join the performers on stage for the Shim Sham at the end of the show. This event will thrill movie musical lovers of all ages.

Visit decaturcitydance.org for more information and to purchase tickets.



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Decatur First UMC Presents a Series on Fenceline Communities

Beginning Thursday, March 5 • 7 p.m. • 300 E. Ponce de Leon Ave.

Decatur First United Methodist Church (UMC) invites the community to join members for a series of speakers led by environmental justice advocates. The series will run every Thursday through April 9 and will focus on health and environmental concerns of fenceline communities, which are located next to electric plants, landfills, chemical plants, and other toxic industries. Subjects to be covered during the series include:

March 5 Faith and the Community

March 12 Energy Equity

March 19 Environmental Racism

March 26 Fenceline Grass Roots Advocacy

April 2 Food April 9 Water

Fenceline communities get their name because the plants are separated from the neighborhoods in which they sit only by fences. Fences do not safeguard neighbors, especially children, from the pollutants and toxins that often, although monitored, find their way into the environment. Many children in these communities suffer from asthma and other childhood diseases because of such exposures. For more information, visit decaturfirst.org.



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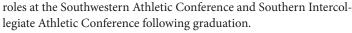




Agnes Scott College Names New Director of Athletics

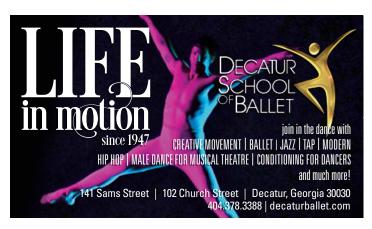
ASC's new director of athletics is Dr. Markesha M. Henderson. She joins the department after serving as associate professor of Business Administration and director of the Center for Innovative Teaching, Learning and Engagement at Clark Atlanta University.

A former NCAA All-American and national champion in track at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Henderson served in a variety of



Prior to her work at Clark Atlanta University, Henderson played a pivotal role in planning the undergraduate and graduate sports management curriculum at the University of West Georgia, which earned the College of Education Program of the Year honor.

Henderson is no stranger to Agnes Scott College, having served as a graduate assistant in the office of Career Planning and Development while completing her dissertation research on the career transition experiences of female student-athletes.





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DHS Student Collects Eyeglasses for Those in Need

Each year, Decatur High School seniors must complete a senior project to graduate. DHS student Amaya Bennett has chosen to collect eyeglasses to assist those in need. She has always wanted to collect glasses to help others who needed them but didn't have the resources financially to do so. Now she has the opportunity through a partnership with the Lions Club of Georgia.

Eyeglasses collection sites include the Decatur Recreational Center, Decatur Presbyterian Church, Gathered and Grounded and the Decatur Municipal Court.





ASC Offers Master of Science Degree in Data Analysis and Communication

Agnes Scott College is expanding its graduate degree offerings to include a Master of Science degree in data analysis and communication, beginning in fall 2020. The new program expands on the graduate degree programs and meets a growing need among data scientists. Students enrolling in this program will take courses that explore topics in the ethical use of technology and data, data analysis, and principles of data visualization, among others, and can tailor their degree to their interests through select elective courses.

Pairing data analytics with communication and presentation skills is a crucial combination, and one that can enhance career and professional growth opportunities for students.

Like the existing graduate programs, the data analysis and communication master's program includes interdisciplinary classroom instruction and flexible class schedules. The program is available to individuals who hold a bachelor's degree and is co-educational.

For more information on Agnes Scott's new master's program, contact Michelle Lacoss, senior director of graduate admission, mlacoss@ agnesscott.edu, or visit agnesscott.edu/graduateprograms.



Battle of the Bands Returns

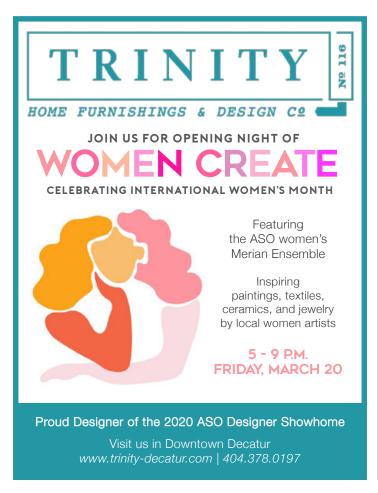
March 27 • 7 p.m.

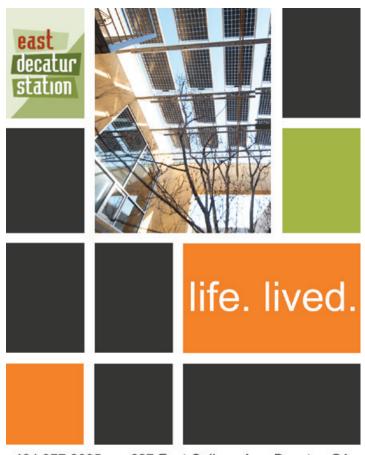
The Marlay House • 426 W. Ponce de Leon Ave.

Westchester Elementary's annual Battle of the Bands, presented by Natalie Gregory Compass and Tim Martin Wealth Strategies, is an adults-only event that raises money for the students and staff of Westchester Elementary. Several bands audition every year to compete in the Battle of the Bands, and the selected five bands compete for the chance to be Battle of the Bands champion.

New this year: each band will add to the battle by covering an 80s sitcom theme song. For more information, or to buy tickets, visit westchesterrocks.org.

Thanks to our "Rock Star" sponsors: Leon's Full Service, DoubleDome Digital Marketing, Kristin Hutchinson Design, The O'Connell Law Firm, Traktion, Mathnasium, and the Sims Family.





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Show off your Decatur on social media and share it with your neighbors. Email your news and photos to renae.madison@decaturga.com.

DHS Junior ROTC Presents Colors





The Decatur High School Jr. ROTC Color Guard presented colors at the DeKalb Symphony Orchestra's Annual Children's Concert in January. The orchestra played the Star Spangled Banner as cadets William Fouts, Jacob Grant, Ben Hicks and Nia Hinson processed. The group is led by SFC (Ret) Phyllis Primus, Army instructor at Decatur High School.

#dhsjuniorrotc

#ohsaycanyousee

#makingdecaturproud

Commission Recognizes DHS Ballplayers



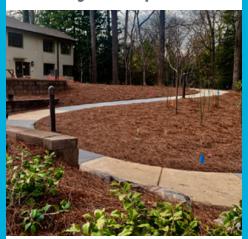
The City Commission recognized the seven Decatur High School Baseball signees, including the number one ranked high school player in the country, during its first regular meeting in February. DHS is looking forward to having a winning season. Players have made the following college commitments: Drew Jordan – Rhodes; Jaxson Sprull – Tougaloo College; Jayden Paden - Georgia Southern; Eddie Galata - North Georgia; Lukas Clark - Johns Hopkins; Jordan Walker (no. 1 high school player in the country) – Duke; Ben Smith - Oglethorpe. Also pictured is Head Coach Robbie Gilbert.

#playball

#dhsbulldogbaseball

#takemeouttotheballgame

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